



California Department of Fish and Game Deer Management Program 2003 Deer Zone Information

Wildlife Programs Branch
1812 9th Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Sacramento Valley and Central Sierra Region

General Deer Hunting Information For

ZONE D-5

(Includes Additional Hunt J-18)

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR DEER HUNT ZONE

This information sheet has been prepared to assist deer hunters applying for, or planning to hunt in, Zone D-5 located in Amador and Calaveras and portions of Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tuolumne counties. The following information should be useful to hunters for archery and general seasons as well as any "additional hunts" within this geographic area. For more specific information or additional questions regarding this area contact the Sacramento Valley and Central Sierra Region Office, 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 (916-358-2900).

REGULATIONS

Laws and regulations are designed to conserve wildlife and to provide for an equitable distribution of game mammals. The hunter who knows the laws and regulations can enjoy the hunting experience more. All hunters should read and be familiar with the current hunting regulations available online at:

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/fg_comm/2003/mammalregs03.html

The 2003 deer hunting regulations specific for Zone D-5 (archery and general season) and any additional hunts are at the end of this sheet. To hunt deer in Zone D-5, hunters must possess a Zone D-5 deer tag. This tag is valid during the archery or general season using the appropriate method of take in either: Zone D-3, D-4 or D-5. Season dates may vary between these zones, so be sure to check the current regulations for the zone you plan to hunt.

Additionally, Archery Only #1 Tags (AO#1) and Archery Only #2 Tags (AO#2) are valid during the Zone D-5 archery or general season using archery equipment only.

Any additional deer hunts in Zone D-5 are listed in the Additional Deer Hunts section, below. Typically, tags for additional deer hunts are in high demand and distributed through the Department's Big Game Drawing held in June. To receive tags for many of these hunts, hunters must plan ahead and are encouraged to submit deer tag applications by late May. For information regarding deer tag application procedures and obtaining a deer tag for this area see the Big Game Hunting Booklet, available on-line at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/biggame/biggamebook.html>

Successful hunters are reminded to immediately fill out both portions of the tag and permanently mark the date of kill; record the appropriate "D" zone (Zone D-3, D-4 or D-5) where they killed their buck; attach the tag to the antlers, or ear if antlerless; have the tag validated and countersigned; and return the completed report card portion to the department within 30 days of taking a deer.

LAND OWNERSHIP/PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

Zone D-5 contains a mixture of both public and private lands however most of the public land is in the

eastern portion of the zone. Remember you must obtain and have in your possession written permission to hunt on private property. Hunter trespass laws are strictly enforced. Public lands within Zone D-5 are administered by the El Dorado and Stanislaus National Forests (USFS). In the western portion of Zone D-5, some public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) exist, however these lands may be difficult to access. For information regarding these lands contact the following:

USFS Offices:

El Dorado National Forest, 100 Forni Road, Placerville, CA 95667 (530-622-5061)

Stanislaus National Forest, 19777 Greenley Rd., Sonora, CA 95370 (209-532-3671)

BLM Offices:

Folsom Field Office, 63 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630 (916-985-4474)

Wilderness lands have been established within several areas of the El Dorado and Stanislaus National Forests. The Desolation, Mokolumne and portions of the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness Areas are accessible by hiking and pack stock. Public use of the wilderness is regulated by permit. Information on wilderness area restrictions and Wilderness Permits may be obtained by contacting the El Dorado or Stanislaus National Forests.

In Zone D-5 and other zones throughout California, additional deer hunting opportunities may exist on private property licensed through the Department's Private Lands Management Program (PLM). For more information on the PLM and to obtain a list of participating ranches, go to the following link:

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/plm.html>

REMINDER: Hunting is prohibited in State Fish and Game Refuge District 1J located on the south side of Highway 88 in Amador County.

MAPS

For general maps detailing individual zone or additional deer hunt boundaries, go to the following link:

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/deer_maps.html

The most comprehensive maps of the area are the El Dorado and Stanislaus National Forest maps. USFS maps are available at all USFS offices or you can contact the USFS Pacific Southwest Regional Office at: 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592 (707-562-8737).

BLM surface management maps may also be useful. You can purchase these maps at BLM district offices or you can contact the BLM at 2800 Cottage Way, Room E2841, Sacramento, CA 95825 (916-978-4400).

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, are very helpful, especially for topographic features that are not displayed on USFS or BLM maps. USGS maps may also be available from sporting goods, backpacking or engineering stores or you can contact the USGS directly at: U.S. Geological Distribution Center, Denver Federal Center, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225 (888-ASK-USGS).

ACCESS/MAJOR ROADS

Major access to this zone is along Highways 49, 50, 88 and 4. Access to public lands in this zone is very good. On opening weekend of the season, most areas that have deer will have hunters. Due to the number of roads, there are very few areas where you can get away from people. Less accessible areas may have fewer hunters and thus provide better hunting.

WEATHER CONDITIONS/TRAVEL TIPS

The weather in this zone can be highly variable, so BE PREPARED. The weather is usually quite hot and dry during archery and early general season, but early storms are not uncommon. The chance for significant snowfall increases throughout the season, but heavy rains can make many roads very difficult, if not impossible, to travel. You should be prepared with appropriate clothing and equipment for a variety of weather conditions.

Zone D-5 covers a large geographic area. The terrain can be very steep and rugged and vegetation can be extremely dense. As you should do in all remote areas, hunters are urged to bring a shovel, a good spare tire, extra water, etc. Use care with any off-road vehicle and check with the BLM or USFS for rules and regulations regarding vehicle and travel restrictions in the area. Horses can be useful in some portions of D-5. However, remember that it may be necessary to carry supplemental horse feed into the back country. Contact the local USFS and/or BLM office for more information regarding forage conditions for livestock.

CAMPING

There are several USFS campgrounds within the hunt zone and these are shown on USFS maps. Informal camping is allowed on USFS lands, but campfire permits are required. Permits may be obtained from any USFS, U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or California Department of Forestry (CDF) office. During fire season, special regulations may apply and it is best to contact the local USFS, BLM or CDF office for the latest information.

Please, DO NOT CAMP at springs or other water sources important to wildlife and livestock. Remaining at artificial wildlife water sources (guzzlers) can be a Fish & Game violation. YOU can pack water, wildlife can't!

HARVEST INFORMATION

Information on deer harvest for this area is available in tables contained in the annual Deer Kill Reports available on-line at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/deerhunt.html> The most useful tables for the purposes of planning or applying for hunts in this area are Tables 1b (Harvest and Success Information), 2a (Antler Class Information) and 10b (Drawing Statistics).

HERD CONDITIONS AND HABITATS

The deer population in Zone D-5 is considered stable to slightly declining, yet considerably below levels seen in the late 1960's and 1970's. As with most deer herds in California and other western states, the long-term population trend has been on a steady decline since the 1960's and 1970's. These long-term declines have been due to land management practices that have precluded fire, resulting in changes toward more mature and less diverse habitats, and reduced quality and quantity of deer habitats. Short-term fluctuations in deer populations are usually attributed to weather events that affect forage production.

The subspecies of deer inhabiting Zone D-5 include both Columbian black-tailed deer and California mule deer. The deer are considered migratory however resident deer occur primarily on private lands at lower elevations in the western portion of the zone. Deer in the eastern portion of the zone are migratory and reside within lands administered by the (USFS) during the early to mid part of the season. From about mid-October, any significant winter storm will cause migratory deer at high elevations in the eastern portion of the zone to move down onto private lands in the west. The deer in this area generally move to higher elevations in late spring and will remain there until the first heavy fall storms force them down below the snow line. This downward movement often occurs during the hunting season, so hunters should be prepared to move to lower areas later in the season after stormy weather.

The vegetation is highly varied throughout Zone D-5 ranging from oak-woodland, mixed and montane chaparral, hardwood, hardwood-conifer, aspen and dense conifer to alpine habitats. Generally speaking, deer populations in this area respond favorably to vegetation disturbances that enhance brush species (wildfire and timber harvesting). Brush stands comprised of buckbrush, deerbrush and bitter cherry are good areas to hunt. Riparian areas (areas along watercourses), recently burned areas or clear cuts that have re-sprouted with brush are good areas to hunt. Areas where oaks are producing acorns may also attract deer. Typically, lower densities of deer are observed in the more densely forested areas or in older, more decadent brushlands.

HUNTING TIPS AND WHERE TO LOOK FOR DEER

Successful hunters often spend a considerable amount of time scouting pre-season, locating individual or

groups of deer, recently used deer trails, and feeding and bedding areas. You may not see many deer from the roads in this area and generally the more successful hunters do more hiking to locate deer. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes can be very helpful for locating and identifying deer at greater distances. In general, attempt to hunt areas that are away from other activities such as concentrations of hunters, vehicles, and/or livestock.

Historically, some of the more popular and productive deer hunting areas in Zone D-5 include:

Alpine County: Areas around Blue Lakes, Mount Reba and Bear Valley on the north side of Highway 4; Higher elevations and peaks south of Highway 4 and around Highland Lake and Pacific Valley; Carson-Iceberg and Mokolumne Wilderness Areas, which offer some opportunity for pack-in hunting.

Amador County: Areas around Silver Lake and east of Bear River Reservoir; and Mount Plasse, Onion Valley, Foster Meadows and southwest of Caples Lake.

Calaveras County: Areas around Black Springs/Cabbage Patch, Mattley Meadows and Bear Trap Basin in the eastern portion of the county; Hermit Springs, Upper Bailey Ridge and Cuneo Camp at mid-elevations on a combination of USFS and private timber lands.

El Dorado County: Areas around Bunker Hill and McKinstry Peak; Van Vleck, Upper Bassi and Tells Peak; Slick Rock, Wrights Lake, Granite Springs and Lyons Creek west to Ice House Reservoir; and Cody Meadows, Leek Springs Lookout and upper end of Alder Ridge on the south side of Highway 50.

Deer move into the intermediate range and winter range areas following October storms. Intermediate range areas are generally between 4000 - 5500 feet. It is normal to have storms after October 20 that result in deer movement. Some of the intermediate and winter range areas include:

Peavine Ridge on the north side of Highway 50 (El Dorado County); Alder Creek area on the south side of Highway 50 (El Dorado County); along the north/south road between Iron Mountain Road and Highway 88 (El Dorado and Amador County); Blue Mountain, Lower Bailey Ridge, Summit Level Ridge and in the Westpoint/Bald Mountain area on the western edge of USFS lands (Calaveras County).

In addition, Georgia-Pacific controls large blocks of land in the intermediate and winter range areas and much of it is behind locked gates. Foot access is allowed by permit.

For additional information about deer hunting in California, see the Department's publication "Guide To Hunting Deer In California" at the following web site:

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/deerguide.pdf>

ADDITIONAL DEER HUNTS

In 2003, there is one additional hunt opportunity within Zone D-5: Hunt J-18 (Pacific/Grizzly Flat Junior Either-Sex Deer Hunt). For general maps detailing the individual hunt area boundaries, go to the following link: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hunting/deer/deer_maps.html

2003 ZONE AND ADDITIONAL HUNT SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

§ 360. Deer.

Except as otherwise provided in this Title 14, deer may be taken only as follows:

(a) A, B, C, and D Zone Hunts.

(4) Zone D-3-5.

(A) Area: Shall include all of zones D-3, D-4, and D-5 (see subsections 360(a)(4)(A)1. through 3.).

3. Zone D-5.

In the counties of Amador and Calaveras and those portions of Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tuolumne counties within a line beginning at the junction of Interstate 5 and the American River in Sacramento; east along the American River to the Middle Fork of the American River; northeast along the Middle Fork of the American River to the Rubicon River; east along the Rubicon River through Hell Hole Reservoir to its confluence with Miller Creek; east along Miller Creek to its junction with the new (marked) USFS Pacific Crest Trail; north on the Pacific Crest Trail one-quarter mile to a junction with the McKinney-Rubicon Springs Road (Miller Lake Road); east along the McKinney-Rubicon Springs Road to McKinney Creek (NE 1/4, section 23, T14N, R16E, M.D.B.M.); east along McKinney Creek to the west shoreline of Lake Tahoe near Chambers Lodge; south

along the shore of Lake Tahoe to the California-Nevada state line; southeast along the California-Nevada state line to Highway 50; southwest on Highway 50 to the Pacific Crest Trail at Echo Summit; south along the Pacific Crest Trail to the township line between Townships 7 and 8 North near Wolf Creek Pass; due west on that township line to the road connecting Lower and Upper Highland Lakes at Lower Highland Lake; west along that road to Highland Creek; southwest along Highland Creek to the North Fork of the Stanislaus River; west along the North Fork of the Stanislaus River to the Stanislaus River; west along the Stanislaus River to Highway 99; north along Highway 99 to Interstate 80; west on Interstate 80 to Interstate 5; north on Interstate 5 to the point of beginning.

(B) Season: The season for zones for D-3 through D-5 shall open on the fourth Saturday in September and extend for 37 consecutive days.

(C) Bag and Possession Limit: One buck, forked horn (See subsection 351(a)) or better, per tag.

(D) Number of Tags: 33,000. The Zone D-3-5 tag is valid in zones D-3, D-4, and D-5.

(c) Additional Hunts.

(39) J-18 (Pacific-Grizzly Flat Junior Either-Sex Deer Hunt).

(A) Area: Excluding Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties, in those portions of Alpine, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties within the area described as zone D-5 (see subsection 360(a)(4)(A)3).

(B) Season: The season for additional hunt J-18 (Pacific-Grizzly Flat Junior Either-Sex Deer Hunt) shall be concurrent with the zone D-5 general season as defined in subsection 360(a)(4)(B).

(C) Bag and Possession Limit: One either-sex deer (see subsection 351(c)) per tag.

(D) Number of Tags: 75.

(E) Special Conditions:

1. Only junior license holders shall apply (see subsection 708(a)(2)).

2. Tagholders shall be accompanied by an adult chaperon 18 years of age or older while hunting.

§ 361. Archery Deer Hunting.

(a) Archery Hunting With General Deer Zone Tags. Deer may be taken during the archery season only with archery equipment specified in Section 354 as follows:

(4) D Zones.

(A) Zones D-3 through D-5.

1. Area: As described in subsection 360(a)(4)(A)1. through 3.

2. Season: The archery season in Zones D-3, D-4, and D-5 shall open on the third Saturday in August and extend for 23 days.

3. Bag and Possession Limit: One buck, forked horn (see subsection 351(a)) or better per tag.

4. Special Conditions: Hunters that possess a Zone D-3-5 tag may hunt in zones D-3, D-4, and D-5.

(c) Archery Hunting with Archery Only Tags. Deer may be taken only with archery equipment specified in Section 354, during the archery seasons and general seasons as follows:

(1) Number of Archery Only Tags Permitted. A person may obtain an archery only tag using a one-deer tag application and a second archery only tag using a second deer tag application.

(2) Zones in Which Archery Only Tags are Valid. An archery only tag is valid for hunt G-10, and during the archery season and general season in all zones except C-1 through C-4 and X-1 through X-12.

(3) Areas: As described in subsections 360(a) and (c).

(4) Seasons: The archery season and general seasons are provided in subsection 361(a) above and in subsections 360(a) and (c).

(5) Bag and Possession Limit: All bag and possession limits per zone are the same as those described in subsections 360(a) and (c).

(d) Hunting Area Limitations. Archers not in possession of an archery only tag may hunt only in the zone, zones, or areas for which they have a general tag or an area-specific archery tag. (Refer to subsection 361(c)(2) for zones in which archery only tags are valid).

(e) Crossbow Prohibition. Crossbows may not be used during any archery season or during the general season when using an archery only tag.

**** GOOD LUCK! ****